United Nations S/PV.3575

Security Council

Fiftieth Year

Provisional

3575th Meeting

Friday, 8 September 1995, 6.40 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Fulci	(Italy)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Cárdenas
	Botswana	Mr. Nkgowe
	China	Mr. Wang Xuexian
	Czech Republic	Mr. Kovanda
	France	Mr. Ladsous
	Germany	Mr. Eitel
	Honduras	Mr. Rendón Barnica
	Indonesia	Mr. Wibisono
	Nigeria	Mr. Ayewah
	Oman	Mr. Al-Sameen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Rwanda	Mr. Ubalijoro
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir. John Weston
	United States of America	Mr. Inderfurth

Agenda

The situation in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina

95-85957 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 6.40 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Egypt, Turkey and Ukraine, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mrs. Kalajdzisalihović (Bosnia and Herzegovina) took a place at the Council table; Mr. Drobnjak (Croatia), Mr. Elaraby (Egypt), Mr. Gelem (Turkey) and Mr. Zlenko (Ukraine) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.

The President: I have received a request dated 8 September 1995 from Ambassador Dragomir Djokic to address the Council. With the consent of the Council, I would propose to invite him to address the Council in the course of the discussion of the item before it.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to the following documents: S/1995/776, letter dated 7 September 1995 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the text of a statement issued by the President of the Russian Federation; and S/1995/778, letter dated 7 September 1995 from the chargé d'affaires ad interim of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council.

Members of the Council have received photocopies of a letter dated 8 September 1995 from the representatives of France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America addressed to the Secretary-General, which will be issued as document S/1995/780.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): The Russian Federation requested that an urgent, formal meeting of the Security Council be called once again to consider the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the situation that has arisen from the extensive bombing of Bosnian Serb positions by North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) aircraft. We wish to repeat our earnest demand that an immediate end be put to these acts of force.

Our approach to this matter is well known, and over the last 10 days it has been expressed repeatedly to our partners in the Contact Group, the heads of the Secretariat of the United Nations, in consultations of the Security Council and in meetings of the countries contributing troops to the United Nations forces in Bosnia. Russia's position was once again clearly expressed in the most recent statements of President Boris Yeltsin of the Russian Federation and statements made by its Foreign Ministry. We are firmly convinced that NATO's continuing air strikes and the Rapid Reaction Force's shelling of the Bosnian Serbs is not strengthening but, rather, undermining efforts to reach a political settlement. They go beyond the decisions of the Security Council, change the peace-keeping character of the United Nations operation in Bosnia and involve the international community in a conflict against one of the parties.

The only logic we can see in NATO's actions is a punitive one. Can we call the daily, planned destruction of the military potential of the Bosnian Serbs "deterrence", as described in resolution 836 (1993), when the military potential of the Bosnian Serbs has been systematically destroyed over many days? The targets of the bombings are not only military sites, but also equipment and infrastructure — bridges and lines of communication, including civilian ones. The delegation of the Russian Federation has so far received no reply to questions regarding either the damage or the casualties caused by the bombings, including those among the civilian population. We insist that the Security Council be immediately informed of the facts.

As the Council knows, the reason for initiating this action was the bloody incident in a Sarajevo market. I should like to say quite clearly that we strongly condemn any such terrorist act, no matter who carries it out. The Security Council was informed that the investigation carried out by the United Nations forces established that the Bosnian Serbs were responsible. Taking this information on trust, we had expected more detailed clarification of the grounds for such a conclusion, particularly since we read items in the press that cast some doubt upon it.

I should like to recall that in the case of a similar incident in a Sarajevo market, on 5 February 1994, which was also used as a pretext for using force against the Bosnian Serbs, Members of the United Nations were able, albeit belatedly, to know the results of the investigation: the culprits of the crime could not in fact be identified. Strikes, however, were still carried out. In the light of that experience, we confirm and reiterate our demand that the Security Council be immediately informed of the details of the most recent investigation.

I would particularly like to emphasize that the procedures agreed upon in the Security Council for the use of force in Bosnia and Herzegovina were seriously violated this time. First, the necessary consultations were not held with members of the Security Council, as stipulated in resolution 844 (1993). Nor were the members of the Security Council informed in timely fashion of the actions that had been taken. This is particularly inadmissible since the actions taken clearly represent a qualitative change in the nature of the use of force. I repeat that the members of the Council, unlike in previous instances, were informed only after the event.

Secondly, the bombing and shelling this time were disproportionate and extensive, whereas hitherto there had been a different understanding in the Security Council in that regard. We know the decision on disproportionate response was adopted in the NATO Council. However, the Security Council took no decisions on changing the principle of proportionality regarding the use of force.

Thirdly, we were astonished to learn, literally a few days ago, from responsible members of the Secretariat of the United Nations, that recently there had been a qualitative change in the "dual-key" procedure, and that now the United Nations had no opportunity to put an end to the use of force without NATO's agreement. It would be interesting to know when and by whom such a decision was taken, because it runs counter to the most recent clarification of the Secretary-General, who in his letter of 1 August to the President of the Security Council (document S/1995/623) clearly indicated that, regarding cooperation between the United Nations and NATO in the use of air power,

> "These 'dual-key' arrangements remain in place." *(S/1995/623, second paragraph)*

As the Council knows, those arrangements gave the United Nations the right to independently put an end to the strikes. For us, as for other Members that contribute troops to the United Nations forces and who are not NATO members, this is an extremely sensitive and important issue, since we are here talking about, among other things, the safety and security of our own peace-keepers.

Fourthly, we recently learned from the media and from statements made by the representatives of UNPROFOR that a certain memorandum of understanding exists between NATO and the United Nations on the use of air power under the new conditions. Neither the Security Council nor the troop-contributing countries — at least, not Russia — were informed of that memorandum, although, as the press made quite clear once again, according to that memorandum the region in which force would be applied falls outside the boundaries of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina and in fact overlaps into neighbouring States as well. This is in direct violation of resolutions of the Security Council. Furthermore, as we understand it, this memorandum also contains a number of other fundamental changes in the approach to United Nations operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In view of the extreme importance of this question, we would also request that the text of the memorandum be immediately made available to members of the Security Council.

Fifthly, the active participation of the Rapid Reaction Force in neutralizing Serbian positions clearly exceeds its mandate as set out in resolution 988 (1995). This is no longer about protecting United Nations personnel and humanitarian convoys; it is a virtual participation in military action against one side. I wish to quote from a document distributed by the NATO secretariat at a meeting of the Political Committee of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council:

> "In the evening of 5 September, firing was observed in Sarajevo. According to the United Nations evaluation, an exchange of fire, initiated by

> the forces of the Bosnian Government, had taken place between the two belligerent parties. The Rapid Reaction Force fired warning shots towards the forces of the Bosnian Serbs. The commander of the local forces of the Bosnian Government received a letter containing a warning."

This approach, I think, very clearly illustrates the fact that the Rapid Reaction Force is no longer impartial, although it remains an integral part of the United Nations peace-keeping operation in Bosnia.

One wonders, therefore, about the entire United Nations operation in Bosnia. We have pointed out that the most recent ultimatum to the Bosnian Serbs essentially contained demands which were previously addressed by the Security Council to both parties in resolution 987 (1995). Thus, the Security Council demand that both parties implement the mutually agreed demilitarization of the safe areas was ignored, as was its call for a cease-fire and a cessation of hostilities. Furthermore, in the same resolution the Security Council called on the parties to cooperate with UNPROFOR in the implementation of these agreements. However, since that resolution was adopted the Security Council has been given no information whatsoever on how UNPROFOR has carried out its instructions to promote negotiations between the parties. Instead, as we all know, UNPROFOR issued an ultimatum to one of the parties.

Such developments may have very serious consequences, not only for the prospects of a peace settlement in Bosnia, but also for peace-keeping activities of the United Nations as a whole and its relationship with regional organizations and arrangements.

We were very pleased to hear the heartening news from Geneva that agreement has been reached on a Bosnian settlement between the Foreign Ministers of Yugoslavia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina under the aegis of the international Contact Group. The logic of peace is making headway, not thanks to but in spite of the mass bombings. Incidentally, as is known, the Bosnian Serbs had agreed to participate in the negotiations as part of a single delegation with Yugoslavia even before the NATO strikes started. It is important that the Contact Group's proposals, which have been in existence for over a year, including not only the map of territorial delimitations, but also the very principles of an equitable constitutional framework for Bosnia and Herzegovina, have, following the Geneva meetings, been accepted by all parties.

The outcome in Geneva, we believe, creates an important positive impulse for an intensified political process on the basis of concerted efforts on the part of all parties concerned. The Russian initiatives, as put forward by President Yeltsin, are also directed along these lines. Let us hope that the logic of war will finally yield to the logic of peace.

Sir John Weston (United Kingdom): I have listened carefully to Ambassador Lavrov and I understand his wish at this time to air fully the Russian point of view. I shall not comment in detail on his presentation. I can say, however, that so far as the United Kingdom is concerned, we are quite confident that the recent United Nations/North Atlantic Treaty Organization action in Bosnia has been appropriate and justified. It has had clear and specific objectives designed to protect the safe areas in line with Security Council resolutions. The Bosnian Serbs have only to comply with the requirements explained to them by the United Nations commanders in theatre and the action will end.

But the real focus of world attention today has been on Geneva and the progress achieved there in the political process. It is clear that there can be no military solution to the conflict in Bosnia. We have emphasized throughout the crisis that all sides, including the Bosnian Serbs, must work towards a peaceful solution. We welcome the outcome of the meeting between the Contact Group and the Foreign Ministers of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, of Bosnia and of Croatia in Geneva earlier today. The principles agreed at this meeting represent an important step forward in the search for a political settlement. In particular, it means in effect that the Bosnian Serb leadership has agreed to negotiate on the basis of the Contact Group plan.

This is only one step on the path to peace. Difficult negotiations lie ahead. All of the parties must be prepared to make compromises if a settlement is to be achieved. But a start has at last been made.

Mr. Ladsous (France) (*interpretation from French*): I should like first to emphasize that the military action of the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Bosnia and Herzegovina is the outcome of decisions taken at the London Conference on 21 July last year as part of a plan to protect the safe areas. These operations were triggered by the particular heinous shelling of the central market of Sarajevo, whose perpetrators have been clearly identified and which has

been vigorously condemned by the entire international community.

I hardly need to recall that the NATO operations are based upon the United Nations/NATO "dual key" mechanism, whose legitimacy is beyond challenge, and in strict respect for the prerogatives of our Council and, more generally, the responsibilities of the United Nations.

This being so, this meeting of our Council — and this is the most important point — is taking place at an especially crucial moment for reviving the peace process in the former Yugoslavia. The meeting of the three Foreign Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which took place in Geneva today under the auspices of the Contact Group, has made it possible to produce an agreement on basic principles acceptable to the three countries. That agreement constitutes a decisive step forward.

This initial result, which should lead as soon as possible to the opening up of peace negotiations, is based upon the proposals of the Contact Group. It was achieved thanks to the diplomatic efforts of all concerned and particularly the initiatives of the United States, as well as France and its partners in the European Union. Nor should we forget the decisive support of the countries of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, with which a lasting and permanent partnership for peace has been established.

I should like to recall that France had long advocated direct contacts between the three countries, advanced specific proposals to that end and reaffirmed repeatedly its desire that a summit meeting should take place. In short, we hope that in this way a dynamic for peace will emerge.

This progress towards a settlement of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia is taking place at a time when the military situation on the ground is becoming clearer, revealing that the actions under way are working in the service of a comprehensive diplomatic solution.

Military firmness is an essential condition for the success of diplomatic action. We must continue to be extremely vigilant. It is essential in this respect that the siege of Sarajevo be lifted, and that heavy weapons be withdrawn from the exclusion zone around that city. All attacks against the safe areas must cease.

In any case, our Council can note with satisfaction today that an important step along the road to peace has been taken, and it must continue to demonstrate the same determination if we intend to progress towards a comprehensive negotiated settlement. We therefore solemnly appeal to the three parties to approach the next steps in the settlement process in an open-minded spirit, a spirit of compromise. France, for its part, is prepared to give its full support to peace and to ensure that the cohesion of the international community, an essential factor in such a settlement, will continue to grow stronger.

Mr. Inderfurth (United States of America): We may be at a turning point in the bloody conflict that has ravaged the former Yugoslavia.

With the signing today in Geneva of a joint statement and agreed basic principles, the basis is laid for an end to the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Even though the threat of war is still with us, these events have opened a narrow and precarious window of opportunity for peace. The international community has worked hard to broker a durable and just negotiated settlement. Indeed, lives have been lost in this effort, including recently those of three dedicated and talented American diplomats, three peacemakers: Robert Frasure, Joseph Kruzel and Nelson Drew. I would like to think — indeed, I believe — that their tragic loss has contributed to the movement towards peace that was in evidence today in Geneva.

This effort to broker a settlement has not, of course, been the work of one nation or even of a few nations, but has included the efforts of the United Nations, the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, the Contact Group, the European Union and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. We must all continue our efforts to assist the parties who have the ultimate responsibility to decide in favour of peace.

The United States agrees with all other members of this Council that the conflict in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina cannot be settled on the battlefield. This is why we have placed so much emphasis on, and invested so much effort in, finding a diplomatic solution. We believe that to defend the possibility of a diplomatic solution the international community had no choice but to respond forcefully to the Bosnian Serb attack on the Sarajevo marketplace. The Bosnian Serb leadership knew the decisions of the Security Council which declared Sarajevo a safe area. They had been warned that continued attacks on the safe areas would lead to a strong

response. They chose to ignore that warning, and now must accept the consequences of their actions.

The United Nations has made it clear that it is not at war with the Bosnian Serbs; nor is the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) at war with the Bosnian Serbs. The current round of air strikes will end as soon as the Bosnian Serb leadership complies with the conditions put to them by General Janvier, which call for nothing more than the implementation of Security Council resolutions. While my Government regrets that air strikes are necessary, we fully support the action taken by the United Nations and NATO to deter further attacks on the safe areas. Those actions are fully authorized by existing Security Council resolutions. It was the Security Council which created the safe areas, and it was the Council that gave the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) the mandate to deter attacks against them. We believe that the Council must now support UNPROFOR's efforts to implement that mandate.

Today's events are a hopeful indication that the parties will choose reconciliation and reconstruction. My Government recognizes that much work remains to be done in translating the Geneva principles agreed today into a viable peace settlement. We will do our part. We call on the parties to do theirs.

As President Clinton stated today in Washington,

> "All the parties will need to display the same flexibility and statesmanship that made today's agreement possible if we are to turn away from war and achieve our common goal of a durable peace in the Balkans."

Mr. Eitel (Germany): Most often when the Security Council meets to discuss the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina the reason for our meeting is another painful turn of events, with more human suffering and a further deterioration of the situation.

Today we meet under different circumstances. Today, as the German Foreign Minister, Mr. Kinkel has said, a light of hope and peace has become visible at the end of the tunnel of despair. Our delegation, therefore, is grateful to the delegation of the Russian Federation for having requested this meeting.

A few hours ago we all witnessed the first meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) in Geneva. Germany welcomes the constructive deliberations and outcome of this meeting. These talks under the auspices of the Contact Group have confirmed that there is a realistic chance for peace.

What is now urgent is to proceed with firmness and determination on the path to a peaceful settlement. We therefore again urge the leadership in Pale to bring about an end to the air attacks against military targets of the Bosnian Serbs. As they have been told by the competent United Nations authorities, very precise steps must be taken, including an end to attacks on Sarajevo and other safe areas and the withdrawal of Bosnian Serb heavy weapons from the total exclusion zone around Sarajevo, without delay; in addition, unrestricted use of the Sarajevo airport must be made possible.

Unfortunately, there have been assertions which cannot go unanswered, albeit briefly. We have read and heard that the air attacks are of a retaliatory or punitive nature. This cannot be true. As we all know, punishment, once decided upon, is independent of a culprit's subsequent behaviour. He may regret his deeds. He may change his behaviour. But the sentence will be executed.

Here, the situation is quite different. All sides, including the Bosnian Serbs, are aware that when the Bosnian Serbs comply with the demands I have just mentioned, the air attacks will end. That is why the air strikes are clearly not of a punitive nature. They are coercive and enforcement measures.

What is being enforced is international law, in the form of decisions by the competent United Nations organ, that is, the Security Council.

The Security Council itself has, by resolution 836 (1993), provided the basis for military action. It authorizes Member States to take,

> "subject to close coordination with the Secretary-General and the Force, all necessary measures, through the use of air power, in and around the safe areas...to support the Force in the performance of its mandate" *(resolution 836 (1993), para. 10)*.

The air attacks of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) were requested by the United Nations. They are aimed at purely military targets. Moreover, the use of force, as I have said, is of a limited nature. Its objective remains attaining the compliance of

the Bosnian Serb side with the legitimate demands I have mentioned.

We join all the other members of the Council in welcoming as a first great achievement the outcome of the Geneva meeting. It will be, above all, the civilian population in what has become a theatre of war that will benefit from this peace effort.

Germany has a fundamental interest in putting an end to the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia. Today, after the meeting in Geneva, we are hopeful that we can pursue the negotiations for a peaceful settlement with better chances for success. For our part, we will spare no effort to achieve this goal, which has eluded us for so long.

Mr. Kovanda (Czech Republic): Since this is the first time my delegation has spoken this month, allow me first, Sir, to congratulate you on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of September and to express our gratitude to Ambassador Nugroho Wisnumurti and his team for the way they conducted the business of the Council in August.

This evening, my delegation wishes to look into the future rather than the past. My Government welcomes the basic principles for a new shape of Bosnia and Herzegovina that parties to the conflict agreed upon earlier today in Geneva. This agreement does not mean an end to the war, at least not quite yet. Nevertheless, it surely represents a milestone on the way to its peaceful settlement. The news from Geneva indicates the readiness of parties to the conflict not only to accept a peace proposal, but also to implement it in good faith. We applaud the recent efforts of United States diplomacy and the continuous efforts of the Contact Group members, which have contributed tremendously to reaching this point.

We call upon the parties to embark on the process sketched out in Geneva immediately, for time is of the essence. The process of reaching a political settlement should no longer be hostage to military extremists who bully and prevaricate while massacring innocent civilians in one Bosnian city after another. The Czech Republic stresses that only unconditional and full implementation of all relevant Security Council resolutions and of the Geneva principles will guarantee a lasting settlement of this conflict.

We wish to point out that not all areas of conflict have been dealt with in Geneva so far. No points of agreement have yet been reached on Eastern Slavonia. Even though the parties intend to return to this issue shortly, we find this worrying. It supports the view, which we share, that more vigilance, including a strengthening of United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO) forces in the area, is appropriate.

In conclusion, let me emphasize the strong and unequivocal support of my country for the role the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) have jointly played and the measures they have taken in recent weeks to prevent further shelling of the civilian population of Bosnia and Herzegovina and to bring the parties to the bargaining table.

The President: I thank the representative of the Czech Republic for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Ayewah (Nigeria): The tragedy in the former Yugoslavia, of which the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina is the worst manifestation, has always been a matter of serious concern to my Government. The former Socialist Federated Republic of Yugoslavia was a friendly country, with which Nigeria enjoyed years of fruitful and mutually beneficial relations. We have therefore supported all the peace efforts and diplomatic initiatives that have been aimed at reaching a comprehensive resolution of the crisis. As a testimony of that concern, my country was one of the first to contribute a battalion of troops to the initial United Nations peace-keeping operation deployed in Croatia in 1992; even now that we are no longer part of the contingent, our personnel are part of the military observer component of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR). Furthermore, since joining the Council, we have supported all well-meaning proposals, in the form of resolutions and presidential statements that have been presented in the Council aimed at moving forward the peace process.

We continue, however, to view with concern the lack of unity of purpose and harmonization of policies among the key players in the crisis, and specifically within the Contact Group. The tendency on the part of the major Powers to pick favourites and to let off the other side easily has not helped to advance our collective search for peace. My delegation has therefore repeatedly called on the regional Powers and organizations most directly concerned and with the capability to take action to coordinate their efforts with those of the United Nations in promoting a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

The recent developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the major offensive in Croatia, have marked a turning point in the crisis. My Government had called upon all concerned to intensify the search for a political solution. And we had been encouraged by some signs that such was beginning to happen. However, the Sarajevo market incident threw another unexpected wrench into the wheel of the peace process.

Another aspect of the problem that has engaged the attention of my Government has been the role of our Blue Helmets in the conflict. While we felt the need to enhance the credibility of the United Nations efforts by enhancing UNPROFOR'S capacity to defend itself and execute its mandate, we also cautioned about the prospects of the United Nations becoming involved as a party to the conflict. In this regard, we have seen the recent NATO air strikes as an appropriate and measured response to the recent artillery attack by the Bosnian Serb forces against a civilian centre, but at the same time we regretted that it became necessary to employ such force.

None the less, let me restate that my Government's preferred option continues to be a negotiated political settlement, and we urge that all concerned accept the pursuit of this option in good faith. The military option is futile and should be abandoned.

The hope of my delegation is that these strikes have not done irreparable damage to the neutrality of the United Nations, as well as impaired the recent glimmer of hope for a peaceful settlement. We think it is not too late to reassess the current strategy and take a long-term view of where it could eventually lead us. Such a reassessment should be carried out by both the United Nations and NATO, not in competition but in partnership.

My Government therefore calls for restraint on all sides and requests those Governments with the greatest influence on the parties to exercise their leverage in bringing them to the negotiating table.

We hope that the conclusions reached today at the meeting in Geneva will provide a springboard and the necessary momentum for advancing the peace process.

Mr. Wang Xuexian (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): The Foreign Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia signed an agreement of principles in Geneva today as a basis for negotiating an end to the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is a positive development for which the Chinese delegation expresses its heartfelt welcome.

On the question of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Chinese delegation has always maintained that its sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence should be respected by the international community. A proper solution should be found through peaceful negotiations — that is, acceptable to the parties concerned. It has been borne out that peaceful negotiation is the only right choice for the settlement of the question in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Based on its principled position, China is not in favour of using air strikes to exert pressure. Doing so will not help the settlement of the question, but, rather, will further complicate the situation and create obstacles to a political settlement. We believe in the light of the agreement of principles reached by the parties concerned that it is necessary to cease the air strikes immediately so as to create a conducive environment for the process of the political settlement.

The options for ending the protracted conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina are complicated. Although an agreement of principles has been reached by the parties concerned, many substantive issues still remain to be resolved. Therefore, we hope that the parties concerned will demonstrate the greatest possible political will and continue their efforts in a constructive spirit and also take to heart the fundamental interests of various nations in this area in order to further move forward the process of a comprehensive political settlement so that lasting peace and stability can be achieved in the area of the former Yugoslavia.

Mr. Wibisono (Indonesia): The conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a matter of deep concern to Indonesia. In this regard we note that we are now entering a decisive phase with regard to developments in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as reflected by the positive outcome of the meeting in Geneva between the Foreign Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. My delegation attaches great importance to any peace initiative in the region.

The long-called-for decisive action by the international community to protect the United Nations-declared safe areas has finally been realized. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) air operations authorized by the United Nations are consistent with

Security Council resolutions — in particular, resolution 836 (1993), which, *inter alia*, authorizes the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), acting in self-defence, to take necessary measures, including the use of force, in reply to bombardments against the safe areas by any of the parties. The same resolution decides that Member States, acting nationally or through regional organizations or arrangements, under the authority of the Security Council and subject to close coordination with the Secretary-General and UNPROFOR, may take all necessary measures through the use of air power, in and around the safe areas of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina to support UNPROFOR in the performance of its mandate.

Furthermore, this action illustrates the effectiveness of the recent measures to streamline the decision-making process within the United Nations, and is reflective of the close cooperation between the United Nations and NATO.

My delegation would like to call upon the Bosnian Serb party to respond positively and without delay to the steps called for by the United Nations and NATO by ending the threat to the safe area of Sarajevo — in particular, by withdrawing their heavy weapons from the 20-kilometre exclusion zone around the city.

My delegation would like to emphasize that a comprehensive solution to the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina can be achieved only through peaceful means. In this regard, we welcome the results earlier today in Geneva at the meeting, held under the auspices of the Contact Group, of the Foreign Ministers of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It is our hope that this meeting will usher in a new phase, one that is marked by a renewed effort towards a just, comprehensive and peaceful settlement of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia.

Mr. Cárdenas (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The actions of the leaders of the Bosnian Serbs against, in general, the safe areas established by this Council and, in particular, against the civilian population of Sarajevo, had exceeded all the limits of humanitarian law and taken the unacceptable road of uncommon cruelty. My delegation therefore understands that the joint action of the forces of the United Nations and of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) now under way became, unfortunately, inevitable as a means of attempting to put an end to the fiery siege that again and again spilled Sarajevo's blood.

The cruelty to which I referred included, let us recall, the unprecedented and shameful abuses recently heaped upon the Blue Helmets themselves, to the astonishment of the entire international community. Lack of respect for the norms and limits established by the Security Council must end once and for all. All the parties must assume their respective obligations. We are all pledged to the attainment of that objective.

However, hope for peace seems to have been reborn today in Geneva. It must still be consolidated, step by step, through negotiations, and this will not be easy.

None the less, we can begin to see the possibility of a logic of peace, built upon a political solution, which gives us reason for optimism. Only by travelling that road with an open heart will we be able to reach a lasting solution.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Italy.

Today's meeting of the Security Council coincides with the arrival from Geneva of information on important, positive new developments in the crisis of the former Yugoslavia. The Foreign Ministers of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) came to an understanding today, in that venue, on some agreed basic principles that will govern the difficult negotiations to come and on the text of a joint statement. We wish to congratulate all those who contributed to this success and to pay a special tribute, as has already been done by the representative of the United States, to the eminent American diplomats who lost their lives near Sarajevo only a few days ago while engaged in helping peace prevail. The good news coming from Geneva is, I believe, the highest tribute that could have been paid to their memory, as well as to the memory of all those who have lost their lives for the cause of peace in the former Yugoslavia.

While recognizing the importance of this development, let us, however, not deceive ourselves into thinking that peace is very close at hand. In recent years too many hopes have been dashed, and too many agreements between the parties in conflict have been treated as simple *chiffons de papier*. However, as pointed out by my Foreign Minister, the Honourable Susanna Agnelli, today's understandings constitute a first important step towards peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, a step that must be consolidated as quickly as possible.

These understandings can help lead to the implementation of the peace plan proposed by the United States, to which Italy and its European partners have contributed from the beginning, and whose terms and general approach it shares.

We would also like to express our satisfaction over the emergence of mechanisms for managing the later phases of the negotiations, on the basis of close coordination with the action of the United States, the European Union and the Russian Federation. Also, in view of the upcoming meeting in Rome of the Contact Group, my country will continue to join the international community in striving to restore peace to Bosnian and Herzegovina.

However, this flicker of optimism and what has been called a ray of hope should not make us forget that the city of Sarajevo and the other safe areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina are still under direct threat from Bosnian Serb shells. The memory of the recent massacre in Sarajevo, in which 32 innocent civilians lost their lives, is still painfully clear to the mind and heart of Italian public opinion.

On many occasions in the past we have declared that the practice of waging indiscriminate attacks against a defenceless civilian population is a particularly heinous practice that is totally unacceptable under every standard of civil society. Hence, it is the duty of the international community to prevent the repetition of such attacks in the future.

This, and only this, was the main purpose of the air attacks that NATO recently launched against Bosnian Serb military objectives, which were carefully selected in order to ensure effectiveness and to simultaneously limit collateral damage as much as possible. These initiatives were adopted in close coordination with the military authorities of the United Nations and of NATO, according to the new modalities illustrated in the Secretary-General's letter of 1 August.

I wish to underline once again that the purpose of these air attacks is not punitive. As my German colleague rightly said, their purpose is to prevent any more horrible episodes, such as the recent massacre in Sarajevo. In short, they aim to put an end to all attacks against the safe areas, force the Bosnian Serbs to withdraw their heavy weapons from the exclusion zone of Sarajevo and grant full freedom of movement to the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) and the other humanitarian agencies.

In other words, it is a question of convincing the leaders in Pale to honour the commitments that they themselves have made in the past. This, and only this, is the goal of an alliance — the North Atlantic alliance — of which Italy is proud to be a founding member, and in whose air operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, after providing in the past substantial logistic support, it now participates directly with some of our aircraft.

On several occasions in the past we have noted that these military operations must not be an end in themselves. They should be seen in the context of a broader political and diplomatic effort by the international community — an effort meant to restore peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and throughout the former Yugoslavia.

Our final thoughts go to those who continue to suffer: the innocent civilians who have been forced to leave their places of origin and wander from place to place without homes, without security and, until today, even without hope. In closing, let me assure them that my country will continue to do everything in its power to bring peace to an area so close to Italy — and close not only from a geographic point of view.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

The next speaker is the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina, on whom I now call.

Mrs. Kalajdzisalihović (Bosnia and Herzegovina): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of September. My delegation is confident that the Council will be on a safe and prudent course under your guidance. Further, I should like to express the deep appreciation of my delegation to His Excellency Ambassador Nugroho Wisnumurti of Indonesia for leading the work of the Council during the month of August.

The Government of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina fully supports the United Nations and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) action against the military targets of the Karadzic Serbs, and considers that the legitimacy of this action is beyond doubt. This action is fully provided for in resolution 836 (1993), which all 15 members of the Security Council voted for. The air strikes against the military targets of the Karadzic Serbs are the only way to stop the terrorizing and the cold-blooded killing of innocent civilians in the safe areas

and to protect these areas from possible invasions, such as those which recently happened in the safe areas of Srebrenica and Zepa.

Since their establishment, the safe areas have in essence been deprived of everything needed for their survival by malicious, criminal cut-offs of water, electricity, gas and all kinds of communications with the outside world and by the incessant blocking of the United Nations Protection Force and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in carrying out their humanitarian missions and delivery of the necessary aid to our population. Does this mean that the questioning of this United Nations and NATO action, whose goals are finally to stop this unbearable and unacceptable terrorism and degradation of the United Nations, is also an acceptance of the further sellout of respect for this world Organization as a barren club of debaters or even the return of the world to former times of confrontation and polarization which for decades gnawed at this world Organization?

The present-day answer of the international community to the 41-month terror against civilians — which has reduced the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina to dust and cinders and deliberately wiped from the face of the earth invaluable treasures created on that territory over thousands of years — came, unfortunately, after a long delay. It came when more than 200,000 non-Serbs, a majority of whom were Bosnian Muslims, have been killed; when over 500,000 people have been wounded, many with lasting consequences; and when more than 1.5 million people have been expelled from the territories occupied by the Karadzic Serbs in genocidal ethnic purges.

The United Nations and NATO action is being carried out very carefully with the intention of silencing the weaponry of unchecked terror or of moving it to a distance from which it will not be able to kill civilians on the streets of Sarajevo. It was undertaken only when Pale again sneeringly rejected the request that the same weaponry be withdrawn beyond the exclusion zone. This action clearly revealed the unlimited stockpiles of weaponry and ammunition available to the Pale Serbs and how disproportionately superior the terrorists are in heavy artillery and war *matériel* over the armed forces of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The action of the United Nations and NATO unpleasantly compromises the arms embargo, as a means of support to the aggressor and as a way of preserving its superiority over unarmed civilians and their defenders, and undoubtedly shows that the arms embargo affects only the legal Government of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. After this action, the question must be posed as to how it can be that the world tolerates the unchecked flow of arms, ammunition, fuel and other war *matériel* to the Karadzic Serbs, with all its fatal consequences, and at the same time stubbornly and unmercifully prevents any action to enable the legal Government of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina to exercise the inherent right of every Member of the United Nations to self-defence.

All these tragic circumstances — all the inconsistencies, this prevention of the legal Government of the Republic Bosnia and Herzegovina from defending itself and the caving in to the Pale criminals officially accused of war crimes — have yet to provoke the kind of worry that is now being demonstrated by some members of the Security Council because of the legal and justified actions that have been taken in order finally to stop and halt the terrorism, which today claimed another seven victims, wounded by the Serbian shelling of a civilian area in Sarajevo.

The United Nations and the Security Council must in their actions be guided exclusively by norms and principles of the United Nations Charter and other important documents of international law, and not by momentary, partial and narrow-minded interests and other unprincipled motives.

With the declaration of peace principles agreed upon in Geneva today, this is a critical moment for taking this fateful turn and finally freeing the world from relapses into the cold war, which are unfortunately now re-emerging.

The President: I thank the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina for her kind words addressed to me.

I should like to inform the Council that I have just received a letter from the representative of Pakistan in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Kamal (Pakistan) took the place reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Croatia. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Drobnjak (Croatia): At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, upon your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of September. My delegation is fully confident that the Council will be on a safe and prudent course under your guidance. Further, I would like to express the deep appreciation of my delegation to His Excellency Ambassador Nugroho Wisnumurti of Indonesia for leading the work of the Council last month.

The Republic of Croatia fully and firmly supports the present ongoing operation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We strongly believe that it is necessary to continue exerting pressure on the Bosnian Serb party, and that NATO's course of action will decisively assist to bring about an overall lasting peaceful settlement in the region. Croatia is assisting in that effort by allowing the use of its airspace by NATO air forces, and providing the use of its ports for the rapid reaction capacity of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR). Croatia will continue to give its full support and assistance to these endeavours of the international community, with the confidence that we are finally on the right track towards peace and stability in that part of Europe.

While supporting the newest peace initiative, let me emphasize the importance of mutual recognition of the countries in the region of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It is essential to protect and unconditionally respect all international borders in the region, as well as the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all the successor States of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Only upon the recognition of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia by the Belgrade Government will the world community be able to conclude that their quest for "Greater Serbia" has been abandoned, and that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) is bona fide involved in the peace process.

In this regard, my delegation must state that Croatia does not find encouragement in today's reluctance of the delegation of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) to subscribe to the basic principle of the peaceful reintegration of Eastern Slavonia into the rest of the Republic of Croatia.

Finally, let me emphasize that Croatia remains determined to pursue the path of peace taken today in Geneva.

The President: I thank the representative of Croatia for his kind words addressed to me. I invite him to resume the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

In accordance with the decision taken earlier in the meeting, I now invite Ambassador Dragomir Djokic to take a place at the Council table and to make a statement.

Mr. Djokic: The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia most energetically demands of the Security Council that it take most resolute and urgent measures to end the ruthless and senseless North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) air strikes and attacks by the Rapid Reaction Force against Bosnian Serb military and civilian targets. Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina cannot be achieved by merciless bombardment of one of the parties to the conflict, the Bosnian Serbs, in an attempt to make them succumb to the will of the Western alliance. As has been the position of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from the beginning of the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina, peace can be attained only with full and equal respect of the vital interests of all three peoples.

The NATO air strikes commenced as a retaliation for the shelling of Sarajevo, for which the culprits have never been clearly and unambiguously identified. However, the scale, intensity and duration of the strikes go far beyond mere retaliatory measures, and their clear aim is to inflict serious injury on the Bosnian Serb military capability, economic infrastructure and even civilian facilities. The scope and intensity of the bombing greatly exceed the mandate that was given to the Secretary-General and NATO by relevant Security Council resolutions with the aim of protecting the safe areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The question must be raised: what possible moral authority do NATO and the United Nations have to pursue a relentless campaign of mass bombardment of the Republic of Srpska, causing unprecedented material damage and numerous civilian casualties?

The continuation of air and other attacks, with simultaneous calls for negotiations, is unacceptable and

incomprehensible, when it is known that the leadership of the Republic of Srpska has accepted the negotiations and shown readiness to resume, together with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the efforts aimed at finding a solution acceptable to all parties to the conflict.

The continuation of NATO air strikes and the actions of the United Nations Rapid Reaction Force are a direct attack on the ongoing peace negotiations. It is absolutely incomprehensible why NATO and the United Nations pursue their ruthless air and ground campaign against the Bosnian Serbs, while important breakthroughs have been made at today's ministerial meeting in Geneva of the Foreign Ministers of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, where basic principles for the establishment of a just and lasting peace have been adopted.

The continuation of the air strikes can only fuel the ambitions of those parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina who are in favour of pursuing a war option. By ruthlessly attacking the Bosnian Serbs, NATO is in fact giving an unambiguous signal to the Bosnian Muslims that it is prepared to fight a war on their side, and to weaken the Bosnian Serbs to such an extent that the Muslim army will be in a position to achieve a significant military advantage. This is certainly not a policy that can lead to peace, but can only be conducive to an uncontrollable escalation of the conflict and its spillover throughout the Balkan region and beyond, with unforeseeable consequences.

By departing from the traditional principles of peace-keeping, neutrality and impartiality, the United Nations and NATO have set out on a slippery slope which can lead them to further involvement on the side of the Bosnian Muslims and full-scale war against the Bosnian Serbs.

At a time when a real chance for a just and lasting peace, which would satisfy the vital interests of all three peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina is at last within reach, it is essential that this opportunity should not be missed and that all measures be taken so that NATO air strikes which threaten to undermine the entire peace process are immediately stopped.

The conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina is having a severely destabilizing and dangerous effect not only on the Balkans, but also on the future of peace and security in Europe as a whole. By deciding to side with the Bosnian Muslims against the Bosnian Serbs, NATO has raised serious questions about the future of security and cooperation in Europe. Rightly, the Russian Federation has expressed strong concerns about not having been consulted about the air strikes, and has vigorously opposed the decision of NATO to pursue them. We welcome such an approach by the Russian Federation, since it is in full compliance with the position that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has advocated from the beginning of the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina — namely, that a political settlement is the only possible solution if the international community truly seeks to achieve peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and stability in the entire territories of the previous Yugoslavia.

NATO's credibility cannot be strengthened by forcing the Bosnian Serbs into accepting solutions contrary to their vital interests. Peace can be achieved only through a painstaking and very difficult — but attainable — political process, in which the vital interests of all peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina will be satisfied.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is ready to make the greatest effort towards the achievement of lasting peace in the Balkans. We pledge that we will do our utmost to ensure that a balanced and equitable compromise is achieved on the basis of the basic principles which have been agreed upon in Geneva today. However, if the cruel bombardment of the Bosnian Serbs continues, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia cannot be responsible for the tragic consequences that could ensue.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Ukraine. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Zlenko (Ukraine) (*interpretation from Russian*): First, Sir, on behalf of the delegation of Ukraine, may I congratulate you most sincerely on your accession to your very important post as President of the Security Council and express our conviction that your political and diplomatic talents, as a person who occupies a very important place at the United Nations, will help in resolving some of the most complex problems which we face. I should also like to express our gratitude to Mr. Wisnumurti for the skilled way in which he guided the Council's work during August.

It is a matter of particular satisfaction for us to speak here at this meeting of the Security Council, which was convened at the urgent request of the Russian Federation. We believe that this meeting is timely in view of the meeting in Geneva, and particularly the outcome

of that meeting, as well as the situation prevailing in the Balkans today.

Ukraine was very much given hope by the results of the Geneva meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. We believe that the situation in the Balkans has now reached an important breakthrough. Direct dialogue has been resumed between the parties to the bloody conflict on the territory of one of the former Yugoslav republics. The fundamental principles agreed upon by the Foreign Ministers of the three countries in Geneva, we believe, lay a sound foundation on which to build a peace settlement in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We believe that the agreement reached on the parameters of the territorial division between the various component parts of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, based on the Washington Agreements, and the Serb Republic, as well as the fact that both parties have been guaranteed the right to enjoy special relations with neighbouring countries, provided there is respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina, are fully consonant with the interests of all national groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and are well balanced.

At the same time, we realize that these major decisions simply mark the beginning of the difficult path to peace in that sorely tried country; much still remains to be done. The parties to the negotiations must shed their prejudices about each other and show political courage, which will make it possible to break out of the vicious circle of violence and fratricidal war in the Balkans.

Ukraine is aware of all the difficulties involved in the Bosnian conflict, and has always felt for that reason that only by peaceful processes and a readiness to compromise by all the parties to the conflict will it be possible to resolve this problem. In its earnest desire to render assistance to the parties to the conflict, Ukraine, through its President, Leonid Kuchma, has expressed its readiness to provide its own services as mediator in the resumed peace process. At the same time, we should like to emphasize that Ukraine's only interest in the Balkans is to establish lasting peace, which will make it possible for our State to develop comprehensive and mutually advantageous relations with all the countries belonging to the former Yugoslavia.

In the light of the progress achieved at the Geneva talks, Ukraine would like to repeat its invitation to the leaders of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to hold talks in Kiev on the whole range of issues relating to a peace settlement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in order to secure further progress in this matter.

The Geneva agreements bring to the forefront two further problems. First, in view of the very encouraging progress which has been achieved in the process of securing a peace settlement in the Balkans, it would be desirable to review the question of putting an end to any further bombing of military targets belonging to the Bosnian Serbs by aircraft of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). We believe that such a step would help create a favourable atmosphere at the talks and help to strengthen trust between the parties.

A second matter, of even greater immediacy, is the question of lifting economic sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which, by its restraint and its well-thought-out position in connection with the most recent dramatic events in the conflict in the territory of the former Yugoslavia, has demonstrated its clear desire for peace. The delegation of Ukraine will have occasion to speak in detail on this subject when the question of suspending the sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is considered in the future.

In conclusion, Ukraine would like to express its appreciation for the efforts made by all the parties which have made it possible for the beginnings of direct peace talks in Bosnia and Herzegovina to take place, thus resuscitating the hope that a comprehensive and lasting peace will be reached in the Balkans.

The President: I thank the representative of Ukraine for the very kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Egypt. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Elaraby (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): Let me at the outset, Sir, convey to you my most sincere congratulations on your accession to the presidency of the Council this month. The Egyptian delegation is confident that your wisdom and your well-known qualities of leadership will lead the Council to concrete results in addressing the delicate international crises that are now before it.

Allow me also to convey my thanks to your predecessor, Ambassador Wisnumurti, Permanent

Representative of Indonesia, for the constant efforts he exerted in leading the Council's work last month.

The Egyptian delegation will not today address the details of the human tragedy that is taking place on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. My delegation, indeed, has already on more than one occasion assessed the dimensions of that problem and has expressed its views on several occasions. Likewise, we have stated to the Council that Bosnia is a Member State of the United Nations and is threatened with gradual disappearance before the very eyes of the whole world. We have said that the Council should assume its full responsibilities in that respect.

This meeting is being held in the wake of the aggression committed by the Pale Serbs against the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which continues today and prevents the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina from enjoying freedom and democracy. That people has endured the most odious practices of neo-racism, termed "ethnic cleansing", which, indeed, is only a form of genocide. Evidence of this can be found in the events of Srebrenica and Zepa, two of the safe areas that ultimately fell under the military domination of Serbian forces. We hope that the Security Council will remain vigilant and aware of the fate that may befall Gorazde as well.

Egypt welcomes all the efforts towards peace and the international peace plans designed to put an end to the bloody conflict in Bosnia. We wish to affirm the following principles.

The first is the inadmissibility of the logic of settlement between the aggressor and the victim of aggression on the basis of proposals for regional settlement and maps showing the division of territory, or the use of carrot-and-stick techniques. Indeed, the Bosnian Government has accepted the peace plans that have been put forward, whereas the Serbian party has wholly rejected them.

Secondly, the pressure exerted upon the weaker party to make further territorial compromises in strategic areas or key zones in Bosnia and Herzegovina on the pretext of finding a practicable solution is a step backwards and is a renunciation by the international community of respect for the territorial integrity of the Member State that suffered the aggression.

Thirdly, the cession of certain parts of the safe areas to the Serbian side under the present division means that the United Nations today is evading the need to protect a State that it itself created. It is also a violation of the commitment undertaken by virtue of resolutions of the Security Council under Chapter VII.

Fourthly, we cannot countenance a re-drawing of the map of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina in such a manner as to consolidate the results of the "ethnic cleansing" practices that have been condemned by the international community.

Egypt, through its contingents in the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), including a battalion in the city of Sarajevo, is contributing to this effort. We believe that the air strikes undertaken by aircraft of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in accordance with Security Council resolutions should continue against Serbian military targets that have persisted in their flagrant defiance of Security Council resolutions and in threatening the safety of the international Forces. These Serbian forces have continued to attack the exclusion zone declared by the relevant Security Council resolution. It is enough to say in this respect that the Serbian side some months ago humiliated the entire international community. Indeed, that party took UNPROFOR units as hostages and used them as human shields. That is a grave precedent that threatens the very existence of the United Nations, undermines its credibility and hampers the performance of peace-keeping forces in general.

We hope that NATO and all States will persevere in this attitude, which promotes the present negotiating process, and provide the necessary military deterrent to oblige the intransigent Serb party to comply with the requirements of international law and react favourably to peace proposals.

Egypt has followed the entire process of the international meetings currently taking place. The United States has made great efforts, for which we are grateful. In conclusion, Egypt hopes that these joint meetings will yield results, both in Geneva and at the forthcoming summit of Member States. We also hope that the international meetings will lead to a comprehensive, just and lasting peace settlement in Bosnia and Herzegovina that will guarantee its Government sovereignty over its territory in conformity with the conditions accepted by that Government.

The President: I thank the representative of Egypt for the very kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Turkey. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Çelem (Turkey): Mr. President, it gives me great pleasure to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of September. We are confident that under your able guidance the Council will successfully carry out its responsibilities. I should also like to pay tribute to Ambassador Nugroho Wisnumurti of Indonesia for the remarkable manner in which he conducted the work of the Council in August.

For a long time now, the blatant violations of relevant Security Council resolutions on Bosnia and Herzegovina, in particular resolutions 824 (1993) and 836 (1993), have remained unchallenged. We have even witnessed with deep indignation the fall of two United Nations-designated safe areas last July. The inaction of the international community emboldened the aggressors to continue with their defiance of international law. They intensified their attacks on other safe areas. The long-awaited appropriate response to the aggressor came only after another marketplace massacre in Sarajevo. We see the United Nations-North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) joint operation, belated as it may be, as a very important step in the right direction. In this context, we strongly support the Secretary-General's statement of 5 September 1995 on the resumption of the air operation. We hold the view that the operation should not be terminated until its objectives are fully met. The involvement of the Rapid Reaction Force in the operation is also totally in conformity with the mandate as set out in various Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 998 (1995).

Turkey is strongly in favour of a negotiated settlement. However, we believe that such a settlement should be just and viable, and we hold the view that it cannot be negotiated when the aggression and genocide have been going on incessantly. First and foremost, an atmosphere conducive to credible negotiations should be created. This can be possible only if we remain determined not to let the aggressor continue with its open defiance of international law.

We agree with the 12-point programme for peace in Bosnia, as announced by President Alija Izetbegovic on 18 August 1995. We fully support the ideas contained in this programme. On the basis of the principles agreed today in Geneva by the three Foreign Ministers, we hope that a just and viable peace will be reached on the basis of the multi-cultural, multi-religious, multi-ethnic character of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We should continue to act resolutely to put an end to the bloodiest aggression and cruellest crimes against humanity since the last World War. We must restore the prestige and moral authority of the United Nations. With our determination, we will increase the chances of a real peace process.

With these thoughts in mind, we welcome the conclusions of today's meeting held in Geneva between the Foreign Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and Croatia.

The President: I thank the representative of Turkey for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next, and last, speaker is the representative of Pakistan. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kamal (Pakistan): Since this is the first time I have addressed the Security Council under your presidency, Mr. President, let me first of all congratulate you on your assumption of your high office. I am confident that under your talented and able guidance the Council will be able to fulfil its responsibilities successfully. I would also like to express my admiration for your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of Indonesia, for the excellent manner in which he conducted the affairs of the Council during his presidency.

The agreed basic principles signed today in Geneva undoubtedly open a new opportunity to bring an end to the bloody conflict and acts of horror, genocide and "ethnic cleansing" that have made Bosnia into a shameful mark on the conscience of the world and on the capacity of the United Nations to deter and roll back aggression.

If this window of opportunity has opened today, it is due in large, even full, measure to the vigorous action and air strikes against Bosnian Serb positions. Only these strikes, and the underlying resolve, have removed the threat of further Serb attacks of the type that we had witnessed earlier, not just in the marketplace of Sarajevo and in Tuzla, but, indeed, all over Bosnia and Herzegovina over several months and years.

Pakistan, along with many other countries, had repeatedly urged that such robust military action should be taken right at the outset. Had that been done, and had the unjust arms embargo against Bosnia and Herzegovina been lifted then, perhaps today's agreement would have seen the light of day earlier and much pain, suffering and shame would have been averted.

We hope now that this resolve of the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) will continue to manifest itself. Only then will there be a chance of ensuring that the political settlement of which a foundation has been laid today will be just, fair and durable, without acquiescing in any way to the criminal and aggressive actions that we have witnessed in the past. Only thus will the United Nations be able to defend the principles of its Charter and the content of its resolutions and decisions.

The President: I thank the representative of Pakistan for the kind words he addressed to me.

There are no further speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 8.25 p.m.